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RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0483
INFO RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0188
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SUBJECT: SHARIA IN EASTERN INDONESIA WANING

¶1. Summary: While Aceh has gained international attention for new laws mandating stoning for adultery and banning pants for women, sharia law has gained little traction in Eastern Indonesia. Since 2003, 11 local governments have issued just 16 bylaws, most commonly to mandate the giving of alms, but the majority have been neither implemented nor enforced. While local leaders on the island of Madura, a conservative island located across a narrow strait from Surabaya, plan to pass three sharia-based regulations in the coming year, they are not expected to be enforced. End Summary.

¶2. Since 2003, 11 local-level governments across Eastern Indonesia have issued 16 bylaws or circular letters (executive orders) to implement certain aspects of sharia law. Seven of the local governments passing sharia-based regulations are in South Sulawesi; there are two each in Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) and East Java. Fourteen of these regulations were issued prior to 2005; the remaining two were issued in 2007 and 2008. The most common type of sharia law mandates payment of zakat, or Islamic alms. Four regulations require various groups to be able to recite the Koran or to wear Islamic dress. Other sharia regulations include a ban on the sale of liquor during Ramadan, a mandate that Muslim civil servants pray together in mosques at prayer times, and a requirement that religious curriculum be taught in public schools.

¶3. Nine of the 16 existing regulations are either not implemented or unenforced. Four of the six regulations regarding zakat remain unimplemented, in large part due to public protest. For example, the Regent of East Lombok, in NTB, issued a circular letter in 2003 which required that the regency government deduct 2.5% from all civil servants' salaries to pay zakat. According to Adhar Hakim, an IVLP alumnus, thousands of teachers took to the streets in 2003 and 2005 to oppose the letter; it remains unimplemented. Similarly, the City of Makassar in South Sulawesi passed a law in 2003 that required professionals such as doctors and lawyers to pay zakat; in 2005 the city passed a law extending the requirement to the general public. However, Samsurijal Adhan, of the anti-sharia NGO LAPAR, explained that widespread public criticism of the measures forced the government to abandon implementation.

¶4. Some of the regulations that have been implemented have not been enforced. For example, a 2003 law enacted by the Pamekasan regency on the island of Madura, in East Java, required Muslim civil servants to pray together in mosques at prayer times, required that religious curriculum to be taught in public schools, and instructed Muslims of both genders to wear traditional Muslim clothing. While this law remains active, there is no punishment for those who violate the law. Muhammad Syarif, the former deputy rector of Trunojoyo Bangkalan University in Madura, explained that the law is only a "call for greater morality" to Muslims in Pamekasan.

¶5. The Regent of Bangkalan, also on Madura, hopes the regency's parliament will pass three sharia-based regulations later this

year. According to Muhammad Syarif, Bangkalan's proposed sharia laws include requirements that high school students be able to recite the Koran, that female students wear "modest" Muslim dress, and that post-graduate university students have a letter affirming their good moral behavior during their previous schooling. He said that the law is inspired by Pamekasan's laws, and should also be viewed as a "call for greater morality" to Muslims in the regency.

MCCLELLAND